



Legislation Text

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Staff Report for a Resolution Accepting the Community Oriented Policing Services Hiring Program (COPS) Grant

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the City Council review and approve the revised Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) federal grant funding proposal outlined below, and adopt the attached resolution resulting in the City funding 2.0 FTE School Resource Officer positions at a cost of approximately \$1.3 million in addition to the \$250,000 provided by the COPS office.

BACKGROUND

On January 6, 2014 the City Council authorized a list of projects for which federal funding opportunities were to be pursued in 2014. Among that list of proposals was a request for additional federal funding through the United States Department of Justice - COPS program. Based upon that direction, City staff and members of the City Council worked collaboratively with the offices of Senator Dianne Feinstein, Senator Barbara Boxer, and Congresswoman Barbara Lee, as well as the City's federal advocate Len Simon, the San Leandro Unified School District and the COPS Office to submit an application for a four-year, \$500,000 grant to fund 4.0 FTE School Resource Officer (SRO) positions. To facilitate this process and ensure a quality application, the City also retained the services of a professional grant writer. The application was ultimately successful with San Leandro one of only a small number of California cities awarded funding.

In order to receive the federal funding, the City Council must adopt a resolution accepting all or a portion of the grant award no later than December 24, 2014.

DISCUSSION

On June 20, 2014 the San Leandro Police Department submitted a COPS grant application to secure a \$500,000 grant to hire 4.0 FTE School Resource Officers. The decision to file this application was brought before the City Council in May, 2014 and approved for submission. Prior to submitting the application, City staff met with officials from the San Leandro Unified School District. During those discussions a partnership developed, and the School District agreed to fund any balance that was not covered by the COPS grant.

In September 2014, the COPS Office announced that San Leandro was selected to receive the requested \$500,000 grant award. Some highlights from the grant application that were incorporated into the grant award conditions of acceptance include:

- Presenting a positive image of the law enforcement profession to local youth
- Nurturing one-on-one relationships with at-risk youth

- Deterring criminal activity and disruptive behavior during school and after-school sponsored activities
- Revitalizing science-based drug, gang, and bullying awareness programs
- Hosting assemblies and various other group-based activities for students
- Facilitating “Season of Service” non-violent/peace-oriented service projects
- Facilitating lunch time & after-school activities for students
- Participating in student counseling sessions and parent conferences, when requested
- Serving as a liaison between the Police Department and local school district staff
- Hosting various community, parent & youth Town Hall meetings
- Establishing service clubs and other opportunities for volunteerism

These highlights will reinforce the partnership that currently exists with the School District, students and community, which aligns with the following adopted FY 2014-15 City Council goal:

- Maintain and support a strong positive relationship between the City, schools and the educational community.

At the October 20, 2014 City Council meeting, the City Council adopted a resolution accepting the four-year, \$500,000 COPS grant. As part of its action, the City Council also directed the City Manager to explore the possibility of having the City provide additional financial contributions to offset the costs of the program beyond the funding offered by the COPS grant. Based upon that direction, the City Manager held discussions with the San Leandro Unified School District (SLUSD) in order to explore various funding scenarios.

As outlined in the attached memorandum from SLUSD Superintendent Mike McLaughlin, the School District has indicated that the funding that was previously committed to provide for the local match requirements of the COPS grant is now needed for other budget priorities. As a result, the School District is no longer able to provide any funding to off-set the costs of the School Resource Officer positions.

SUMMARY

Due to the loss of matching funds from the School District, the City Manager recommends that the City Council modify its previous approval and adopt the attached resolution authorizing the creation of 2.0 FTE additional School Resource Officer positions, and accept \$250,000 in funds from the COPS office to partially off-set the costs of these new staffing positions. As outlined in Attachment A, this would result in approximately \$1.3 million of General Fund costs over the 4-year duration of the grant.

Fiscal Impacts

If adopted by the City Council, the City Manager’s recommendation would commit approximately \$1.3 million in additional City funds over the four-year duration of the grant. It is also important to note that when the grant expires, it is anticipated that the City would absorb the ongoing costs of the two additional staffing positions. These additional, ongoing costs beyond the fourth year of the grant are not reflected in the attached funding formula.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: City Manager's Recommended Cost Sharing Formula
- Attachment B: Memorandum from SLUSD Superintendent Mike McLaughlin

PREPARED BY: Chris Zapata, City Manager